

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, claim 7 is objected to, for the reasons set forth on page 2 of the Office Action. Applicant amends claim 7, as indicated herein, and believes that this amendment obviates the Examiner's objection thereof.

Claims 1-9 are all the claims pending in the application. Although the Examiner previously found claims 4, 5, 8, and 9 to contain patentable subject matter, the Examiner now rejects all of the pending claims as follows. Claims 1, 3-6, and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Tang et al. (U.S. Patent No.: 6,160,629), hereinafter referred to as Tang. Claims 2, 7, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Tang as applied above in view of claims 1, 6, and 8, and in combination with Uematsu (U.S. Patent No.: 5,562,351).

§ 102(e) Rejections (Tang) - Claims 1, 3-6, and 8

Claims 1, 3-6, and 8 are rejected for the reasons set forth on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action.

With respect to independent claims 1 and 4, Applicant amends these claims to include the limitations of claim 2, and submits that claims 1 and 4 are patentable for reasons set forth below in the next section.¹

Applicant submits that dependent claims 3 and 5 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from amended independent claims 1 and 4, respectively.

¹ Claims 2 was rejected over Tang and Uematsu, therefore claim 1, which now includes the features of claim 2, is discussed below in the section where Tang AND Uematsu are discussed.

With respect to independent claim 6, Applicant submits that nowhere does Tang teach or suggest at least “(b) requesting a user to input a secret code when the print type information is set to be confidential printing,” as recited in claim 6. That is, Tang does not disclose that a “request” is made of a user to input a secret code. Tang only discloses that a user may print copies of a print job by entering a privacy code, but nowhere does Tang disclose that a user is “requested” to input a secret code. Therefore, at least based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that claim 6 is patentably distinguishable over Tang.

Applicant submits that independent claim 8 is patentable for reasons similar to those set forth above for claim 6, as claim 8 also describes that a user is requested to input a secret code.

§ 103(a) Rejections (Tang / Uematsu) - Claims 2, 7, and 9

Claims 2, 7, and 9 are rejected for the reasons set forth on pages 4 and 5 of the Office Action.

With respect to claim 2, this claim is canceled, as indicated herein, however the features of claim 2 are now included in claim 1. Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable at least based on the newly added features of claim 2, and argues this point as set forth below.

The Examiner alleges that Tang discloses the features of amended claim 1, as added herein, except the Examiner acknowledges that Tang does not disclose “wherein the printer controller controls the sound output device to sound the alarm when confidential print data to be printed is received,” as recited in amended claim 1. The Examiner alleges, however, that Uematsu makes up for the deficiencies of Tang. The Examiner further states, “The suggestion for modifying the printer of Tang can be reasoned by one of ordinary skill in the art ... because the modified printer of Tang would be desirable when its printer controller has a function for

informing the user of a message through the buzzer if the confidential print data is received.

Therefore, any of the walkup users would easily know the confidential print jobs [that] are received by the shared printer in the network.” In response, Applicant submits that the Examiner has used impermissible hindsight reasoning in determining that one skilled in the art would have been led to combine Uematsu with Tang. Nowhere does either of the applied references disclose that an “alarm” should sound-off if confidential information is sent to be printed by a printer.

Thus, one skilled in the art, in view of Tang and Uematsu, would not have been led to combine the two references to arrive at the conclusion that an alarm should sound-off when confidential information to be printed is receive at a printer. Therefore, at least based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that amended independent claim 1 is patentable over the applied references.

With respect to dependent claim 7, Applicant first submits that this claim is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency from independent claim 6. Uematsu does not make up for the deficiencies of Tang. Further, Applicant submits that claim 7 is patentable for reasons similar to those set forth above for claim 1.

Also, Applicant submits that claim 8 is patentable for reasons similar to those set forth above for claim 1.

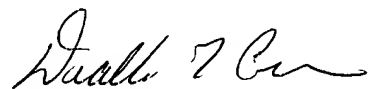
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. APPLN. NO.: 09/455,331

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. Q57074

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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